

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06
PRS-01 /060 W
-----005189 131902Z /11

P 130915Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 337
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY

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BANGKOK FOR DERIAN

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: SHUM, RP
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS: PUBLIC REACTION TO DERIAN VISIT

1. SUMMARY. PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE DERIAN VISIT
ATTRIBUTED TO PRESIDENT MARCOS AND DND SECRETARY ENRILE
WERE STRONGLY DEFENSIVE IN TONE. SUBSEQUENT EDITORIAL
AND OTHER PRESS COMMENT CONTINUED THESE DEFENSIVE THEMES.
END SUMMARY.

2. JANUARY 12 MANILA DAILIES FRONT-PAGED COMMENTS BY
PRESIDENT MARCOS TO ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN AT
THEIR MEETING THE PREVIOUS DAY. REFLECTING THE GENERAL
GOP DEFENSIVENESS IN CONNECTION WITH THE DERIAN VISIT,
MARCOS REPORTEDLY ASSURED THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY THAT
THE PHILIPPINES RESPECTS HUMAN RIGHTS AND THAT EVERYTHING
IS BEING DONE IN THIS REGARD "NOT BECAUSE SOMEBODY ELSE
TELLING US TO DO SO, BUT BECAUSE WE BELIEVE IN IT."

3. ACCORDING TO THE PRESS, MARCOS TOLD MS. DERIAN THAT
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REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE UNITED STATES DOES, THE PHILIPPINES
WILL CONTINUE RESPECTING HUMAN RIGHTS BECAUSE IT IS PART
OF ITS TRADITION. "WE FOUGHT FOR IT AND ALMOST DIED FOR
BT, MARCOS REPORTEDLY SAID TO MS. DERIAN. THE PRESIDENT
NOTED THAT THE PHILIPPINES WAS AMONG THE FIRST TO SUPPORT
EFFORTS FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE CONCERN FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS.

4. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, THE PRESIDENT OUTLINED TO MS. DERIAN THE PROGRAMS THE GOP IS UNDERTAKING TO IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE COMMON MAN AND TO BRING ABOUT EQUALITY AND FREEDOM FOR THE INDIVIDUAL. MARCOS WENT ON TO CITE LAST YEAR'S LETTER OF INSTRUCTION NO. 621 (ON ARRESTS AND TREATMENT OF DETAINEES) AS ONE OF HIS ACTS TO INSURE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE NOT VIOLATED.

5. PRESS ALSO REPORTED ON MS. DERIAN'S "NO HOLDS BARRED" TALKS WITH DND SECRETARY ENRILE WHO CITED UNCOMPROMISING GOP POSTURE ON ANY FORM OF ABUSES COMMITTED BY MILITARY PERSONNEL. IN RESPONSE TO MS. DERIAN'S QUESTION ON THE CLOSING DOWN OF SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS AT THE TIME OF THE PROCLAMATION OF MARTIAL LAW, ENRILE NOTED THAT THESE NEWSPAPERS WERE USED BY SUBVERSIVES IN THEIR PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGN TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, HE ADDED, IS NOT A LICENSE TO SMEAR ONE' NAME WITH IMPUNITY. ENRILE CONTINUED THAT THE AMERICAN STYLE OF DEMOCRACY INTRODUCED IN THE COUNTRY DID NOT WORK QUITE WELL WITH FILIPINOS SO THAT SOME INNOVATIONS HAD TO BE MADE TO SUIT THE EXISTING CONDITIONS.

6. DAILY EXPRESS OF JANUARY 13 CONTINUED THESE DEFENSIVE THEMES WITH AN EDITORIAL CARTOON, AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "A TRADITION OF HUMAN RIGHTS," AND SEVERAL PARAGRAPHS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OF TEODORO VALENCIA'S COLUMN HEADLINED "WE DON'T HAVE TO KEEP ASSURING US". CARTOON SHOWS PRESIDENT CARTER READING NEWSPAPER HEADLINE "RIGHTS POLICY NOT INSPIRED BY US--FM", WITH CAPTION: "I HAD THAT FUNNY FEELIN' I WUZ NOT THAT ORIGINAL...*"

7. TEXT OF DAILY EXPRESS EDITORIAL FOLLOWS: QUOTE. THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AS PRACTICED IN THIS COUNTRY AGAIN TOOK CENTER STAGE THE OTHER DAY IN DISCUSSIONS HELD BETWEEN PRESIDENT MARCOS AND VISITING AMERICAN OFFICIALS, AND THE ASSURANCE GIVEN BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS CONTINUE TO BE RESPECTED UNDER MARTIAL LAW SHOULD HOPEFULLY PUT THE US STATE DEPARTMENT'S MIND AT PEACE.

THE ASSURANCE OF PATT DERIAN, US ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, MERELY RESTATES THE CONSISTENT PHILIPPINE VIEW ON THE MATTER: THAT THE NATION'S HISTORY IS STEEPED IN DEMOCRACY AND PHILIPPINE TRADITION DICTATES THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL CITIZENS.

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION 2 SERVICED; TO FOLLOW.

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 338
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK PRIORITY
CINCPAC PRIORITY

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BANGKOK FOR DERIAN

THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S APPREHENSION SPRINGS
FROM ITS RATHER UNFOUNDED BELIEF THAT MARTIAL LAW
POLICIES CAN NEVER BE COMPATIBLE WITH HUMAN RIGHTS, A
VIEW EXACERBATED BY THE BIASED WESTERN PRESS THROUGH
THE PUBLICATION OF DISTORTED AND BLOWN-OUT-OF-PROPORTION
NEWS REPORTS ON ISOLATED CASES OF MILITARY ABUSES, TORTURE,
AND CRIMES.

WHAT MAKES THE AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
VIOLATIONS IN THE COUNTRY MORE DIFFICULT TO STRAIGHTEN OUT
IS THE SEEMING AMERICAN BELIEF THAT THE AMERICAN WAY IS
THE ONLY CORRECT WAY AND THAT THE PRACTICE OF HUMAN
RIGHTS CANNOT POSSIBLY HAVE VARIATIONS, DIFFERENCES IN
SOCIO-ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS NOT-
WITHSTANDING.

YET IT IS PRECISELY IN THE VASTLY DIVERGENT SITUATIONS
IN THE PHILIPPINE AND AMERICAN SETTINGS THAT RESPECT FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS AND ITS PROTECTION FOR THE GREATER NUMBER
OF THE PEOPLE IS GROSSLY MISINTERPRETED BY WESTERN OBSERVERS.
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HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, THERE HAVE BEEN. TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS ON TRADITIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE MANY, THERE ARE SOME. BUT THE PRESERVATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS CAN NEVER BE COMPROMISED. AS THE PRESIDENT HIMSELF SAID, "WE FOUGHT FOR IT AND ALMOST DIED FOR IT." END TEXT.

8. RELEVANT TEXT OF VALENCIA COLUMN FOLLOWS:

BEGIN QUOTE. I'M GLAD PRESIDENT MARCOS REMINDED MS. PATTERIAN OF THE US STATE DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE THAT IF THE FILIPINOS RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS, IT IS NOT BECAUSE THE AMERICANS MAKE THEM. HUMAN RIGHTS ARE PART OF OUR NATIONAL HERITAGE. IN FACT, WE SHOULD HAVE STOPPED ASSURING AMERICANS OF OUR RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. WE HAVE BEEN GIVING THEM THE WRONG IMPRESSION ALL ALONG THAT WE WANTED TO WIN POINTS AND A PAT ON THE BACK OR AVOID A SPANKING. WE MIGHT EVEN GO FARTHER TO SAY THAT WE FOUGHT THE JAPANESE NOT BECAUSE OF OUR LOYALTY TO THE UNITED STATES BUT BECAUSE WE ALSO BELIEVED IN DEMOCRACY.

PHILIPPINE-AMERICAN RELATIONS SUFFER FROM A COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION GAP. AMERICANS HAVE BEEN CONDITIONED BY THE AMERICAN PRESS TO BELIEVE THAT FILIPINOS WOULD DIE IF THEY WERE ABANDONED BY THE USA, THAT AMERICA TAUGHT US DEMOCRACY. SOMEONE HAS TO TELL THEM THAT WHEN THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR BROKE OUT, WE ALREADY HAD A DEMOCRATIC CONSTITUTION, A CONSTITUTIONAL ASSEMBLY, A CONGRESS AND A DULY ELECTED PRESIDENT. BUT MOST OF ALL, SOMEONE HAS TO TELL THE AMERICANS THAT FILIPINOS SPEAK ENGLISH NOT TO PLEASE AMERICANS--THEY JUST HAPPEN TO KNOW HOW TO.

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THE AMERICAN PRESS AND SOME OF HER OFFICIALS WANT TO GET CREDIT FOR WHAT OTHERS PEOPLES DO ON THEIR OWN. THE MOST IRRITATING EXAMPLE IS THIS AMERICAN CANARD THAT IF AMERICA DID NOT POLICE THE WORLD, HUMAN RIGHTS WOULD NOT BE RESPECTED ANYWHERE ELSE EXCEPT IN AMERICA. WHY DON'T THEY START ON RUSSIA AND CHINA? OBVIOUSLY, THEY'RE DETERMINED TO DISCIPLINE ONLY THOSE WHO ARE ALREADY DOING IT ON THEIR OWN VOLITION. THE PHILIPPINES CANNOT DISREGARD HUMAN RIGHTS JUST TO SPITE THE UNITED STATES--THAT'S UNFORTUNATE.

FILIPINOS LOVE HUMAN RIGHTS AND WILL FIGHT FOR IT. IF ANY PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING THE MARTIAL LAW GOVERNMENT, WERE TO DISREGARD HUMAN RIGHTS, IT WOULD FIND

ITSELF IN REAL TROUBLE. ISOLATED CASES OF HUMAN RIGHTS
VIOLATIONS WHICH THE AMERICAN PRESS HAS BALLOONED BEYOND
PROPORTIONS DO NOT MIRROR THE TRUE SITUATION IN THIS
COUNTRY. EVEN IN THE UNITED STATES, THERE ARE HUMAN
RIGHTS VIOLATIONS. WHEN IT HAPPENS THERE, THEY CALL IT
A LAPSE. IF SOME VIOLATIONS HAPPEN ELSEWHERE, THEY
SAY IT IS THE GENERAL RULE. IF A NATION RESPECTS HUMAN
RIGHTS, THEY SAY THIS COULD NOT HAPPEN IF AMERICA
DID NOT INTERVENE TO MAKE SURE OF IT. END QUOTE.
NEWSOM

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